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It was Raju's little sister Meena's birthday. It was a grand occasion for Raju. Nandu, Vinay, Rekha, Ashok all were to come with beautiful presents.

Raju couldn't think of a gift. He wanted to present something very very very special.

He thought and thought and thought. Suddenly he hit upon an idea.

A mask, a beautiful colourful mask. Green stripes on the cap, pink on the cheeks, crimson lips.

With dashes of paint in no time he painted a mask on a piece of cardboard and cut it into shape.

What a colourful present: Meena was delighted.

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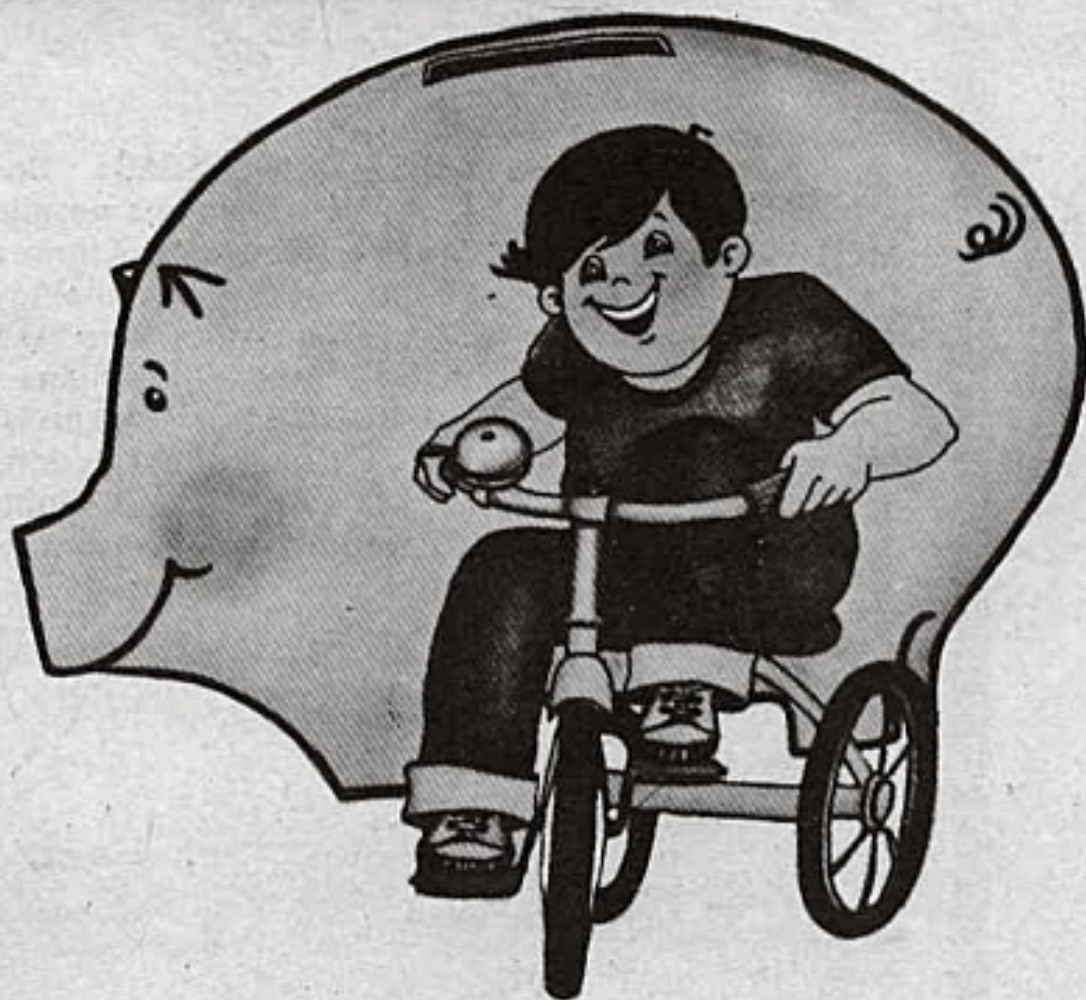
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IN THIS ISSUE

- THE THREE PRINCESSES:** Continuing the fairytale novella...*Page 11*
- MEN WITH WINGS:** The first human fliers from the Western mythology...*Page 16*
- ALLURI SITARAMA RAJU:** The patriot who raised an army of hillmen...*Page 31*
- THE LAST DAYS OF THE BUDDHA:** Final instalment of the saga of the Buddha...*Page 35*
- THE DAMSEL OF KASHMIR:** An Arabian Nights story of a youth's daring adventure...*Page 43*

*PLUS FIVE STORIES AND
SEVEN OTHER FEATURES.*

GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

आमरणान्ताः प्रणयाः कोपास्तत्क्षणभङ्गगुराः ।

परित्यागाश्च निःसङ्गा भवन्ति हि महात्मनाम् ॥

Āmaraṇāntāḥ praṇayāḥ kopāstatkṣaṇabhāṅgurāḥ

Parityāgāśca niḥsaṅgābhavnti hi mahātmanām

Life-long is the love of the noble souls, while their anger is momentary. The sacrifice they make for others are motiveless.

The Hitopadeshah



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Founder: CHAKRAPANI

Controlling Editor: NAGI REDDI

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE FOR THE DUSSEERAH

According to savants, a land which laid stress on the worship of the Divine Mother had a great culture. Indeed, even in our human life, our human mother is the nearest thing we have to heaven! Where would a child be; but for the love and sacrifice of its mother?

When the people worship the Divine Mother, they place themselves, collectively, in the place of children. They look upon the Divine as the Mother of all. They pray to Her for light, wisdom and protection. Such an attitude once in a while reminds us of a great truth: However strongly armed we may be with our education, science and wealth, we are still groping in darkness. What is the nature of the power that launched this universe? Why was man created? Wherefrom do we get all our passions, emotions, dreams and ambitions? What is the true goal of life? What can bring us true happiness? We are yet to find answers to such basic question.

But since the questions are there, the answers must be there too. If our mind cannot find them, something more than mind—a higher consciousness—can.

It is in this spirit that our ancient seers prayed to the Divine Mother—to give them higher consciousness.

Dusserah, the festive worship of the Divine Mother, will take place all over India in October. This is the time for us to develop the right attitude with which to participate in it, if we wish to derive true benefit out of the occasion.



LET US KNOW

What is Dead Sea?

T. S. R. Murthy, Ongole.

The Dead Sea is the name of a salt lake in southern Palestine. The river Jordan terminates in this lake.

Many events described in the Bible took place around this lake. It is believed that two ancient towns, Sodom and Gomorrah, got submerged in the Dead Sea. Modern research supports this legend.

This legend might have contributed to the people of the olden days developing a dread for this lake. Early travellers reported that no plant could thrive in its poisonous atmosphere; if any bird tried to fly over it it fell dead. Further they spread the rumour that the waters of the lake remained wave-less, dead!

These are not facts. To many modern observers, the Dead Sea presents exquisite scenery with the bluish-green colour of its waters and deep gorges. No doubt, it has an awesomeness about it.

It is nearly 46 miles long and ten miles broad.

What is the longest word in English language?

M. K. Dash, Sankhachila.

A. K. Patna, Singla.

As we see in the *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary*, it is PNEUMONULTRAMICROSCOPICSILICOVOLCANOCONIOSIS (45 letters), a kind of disease caused by habitually inhaling mineral or metallic dust.

(Readers are requested not to send new questions for a few months. Let your magazine finish answering at least a part of the backload of questions.)

THREE PRINCESSES

14

(All set for the ceremonial sacrifice, the giant found out that the three princesses were disfigured! He was furious. He postponed the ceremony and took the three girls away and dropped them in another forest.)

Udayan kept gazing at the sky. The vultures disappeared in the clouds. He sighed and advanced towards that area of the forest where the door into the underground castle remained buried in leaves.

He remembered that he could not remain invisible once he entered the secret castle. But curiosity got the better of him. He removed the leaves and found a tunnel going down. There were well cut-out stone

steps to the underground castle.

Slowly Udayan began to descend. Suddenly a roar met his ears. He stopped. On the floor below the steps stood two huge lions. They had already seen Udayan. One of them was seen advancing towards him. Udayan turned back instantly and, in a few bounds came out of the tunnel. As soon as he was out he grew invisible again.

He closed the door of the tunnel and hid it under dry





leaves. Then he walked towards the lake.

He saw the situation around the lake totally changed. The giant-guards had lighted several fires in all sides of the lake. Some of them were singing some strange songs as they were strolling with lusty sticks and swords in their hands. Udayan understood that the master-giant had taken all possible steps to guard his prisoners. However, he being invisible, there was no question of anyone seeing him. He went close to the lake and looked for the three princesses. Needless to say, he was not aware of the fact that the giant

had whisked away the three princesses from the forest.

Standing on the bank, he started counting the swans. There were now fortyfive of them. Instantly it struck him that the princesses were no longer there. He felt disappointed. What should be his duty now? He wondered.

* * *

The giant dropped the three princesses in another forest several miles away. While doing so he touched them with a magic bone and took their power of speech away.

Imagine the plight of the girls. They were already disfigured! Now they even could not communicate with one another. They set near a bush, helpless and sad.

"Who are you? What are you doing in this deep part of the forest?" asked a princely stranger with surprise. The three sisters kept looking at him, but however they tried, they could not speak. Their faces were marked by streams of tears. The stranger went closer to them and nodded and said, "I understand, you are dumb. But I have a feeling that you come of some great family. Once I have found you

here I cannot go away leaving you to the beasts. Come on, let me lead you to my castle. For your information, I am the king over this land, Virpratap by name."

The three sisters looked at one another. They had no other go. Although it was risky to follow a stranger, to remain there was to invite death. Once or twice they had already heard the roars of a tiger. They followed the king.

The king made them mount his horse. He asked his bodyguards who were nearby to guide the horse slowly and carefully towards his palace. He walked ahead of them.

The girls were comfortably lodged in a beautiful apartment of the palace. The king at once called his minister and told him about his unusual discovery. "I went for a deer but bagged three unknown girls. Will you try to find out who they are?" He told the minister.

The minister met the girls and placed before them a stone slate and a piece of chalk. "I understand that you cannot speak. Please write down the name of your father," he suggested.

The girls cast a pitiable look



at the minister and with signs of their hands made it clear that they did not know how to write. Indeed, the princesses had been kidnapped before they had begun to learn reading or writing.

The minister returned to the king and said, "My lord, I do not think we will be able to know the whereabouts of the girls. All we can do is to wait, hoping that somebody would come in search of them."

* * *

"My lord, the young man who had restored my old father's vision is here again," announced the officer who had earlier



hosted Udayan.

"Is that so? Bring him to me immediately," said the king. As soon as his eyes fell on Udayan he extended his hands and received him most cordially. Both were seated in the king's private chamber. The king said, "Believe me, I was looking forward to your visit. You cured a blind. Most probably you can cure cripples too. But first tell me if your mission has been accomplished and you have come to live in my court permanently!"

"My lord, my mission is yet to be fulfilled. I have come to seek your help," said Udayan.

"I will do whatever I can to help you. What is your need?"

Encouraged by the king's assurance, Udayan told him all about his mission and about the three missing princesses and his anxiety to find them out.

The king looked grave. "In what manner can I help you?" he asked.

"All I need at the moment is a good artist. I will take him with me and return in a week's time," said Udayan.

The king called his court artist and ordered him to accompany Udayan. Outside the forest Udayan made himself and the artist invisible. Both undertook a journey to the giant's lake. The artist observed the figure and the dress of the giant intently and took a clear mental note of them. Then both were back at the palace of King Virpratap. In three days the artist succeeded in painting and dressing Udayan in such a fashion that Udayan looked exactly like one of the giant-guards.

Soon Udayan was back at the lake. He wanted to grow invisible. But the magic powder was missing. He kept himself hidden in a pit till it was dark. Then he observed, a batch

of giant-guards came out of the underground castle and a new batch began entering it. Quietly he joined the new batch and descended the stairs of the tunnel. Nobody suspected him. He felt reassured that his disguise had been perfect. But he was on the last step when both the lions rushed upon him roaring fearfully. Udayan fell down, clawed at by one of them. No doubt he would have been torn to pieces in a moment. But all the giant-guards began attacking the lions simultaneously.

"How audacious these stupid beasts have become! Today they have attacked one of us. Tomorrow they might attack the others. They must have grown

crazy," they shouted as they clubbed the lions and drove their swords into them. In a short time the lions lay dead.

The giant-guards heaved sighs of relief. They bandaged the wound suffered by Udayan and made a cosy bed for him. "Rest here till you are all right. We will bring you food and drink," they told him with kindness. Udayan was happy.

At midnight the master-giant entered the underground castle. No sooner had his eyes fallen on the dead lions than he thundered, "Who did this?" His shout echoed and re-echoed in the tunnel and the castle. He stood not far from where Udayan lay. Udayan was scared stiff. — *To continue*



WORLD MYTHOLOGY—5

MEN WITH WINGS

Daedalus of Athens was a genius. He invented the sail for the ship, invented the axe, the awl and the bevel.



His sister's son, Talus, was his pupil. Talus invented the potter's wheel and showed it to Daedalus.



Daedalus feared that Talus might surpass him in crafts. He led Talus to a hilltop and pushed him down to death.



His crime was found out. The Government of Athens decided to punish him. But Daedalus and his son, Icarus, fled.





They reached Crete, ruled by King Minos. At the King's request, Daedalus built a Labyrinth - a castle with intricate alleys.

For some reason Minos got annoyed with Daedalus and imprisoned him and Icarus in that very labyrinth.

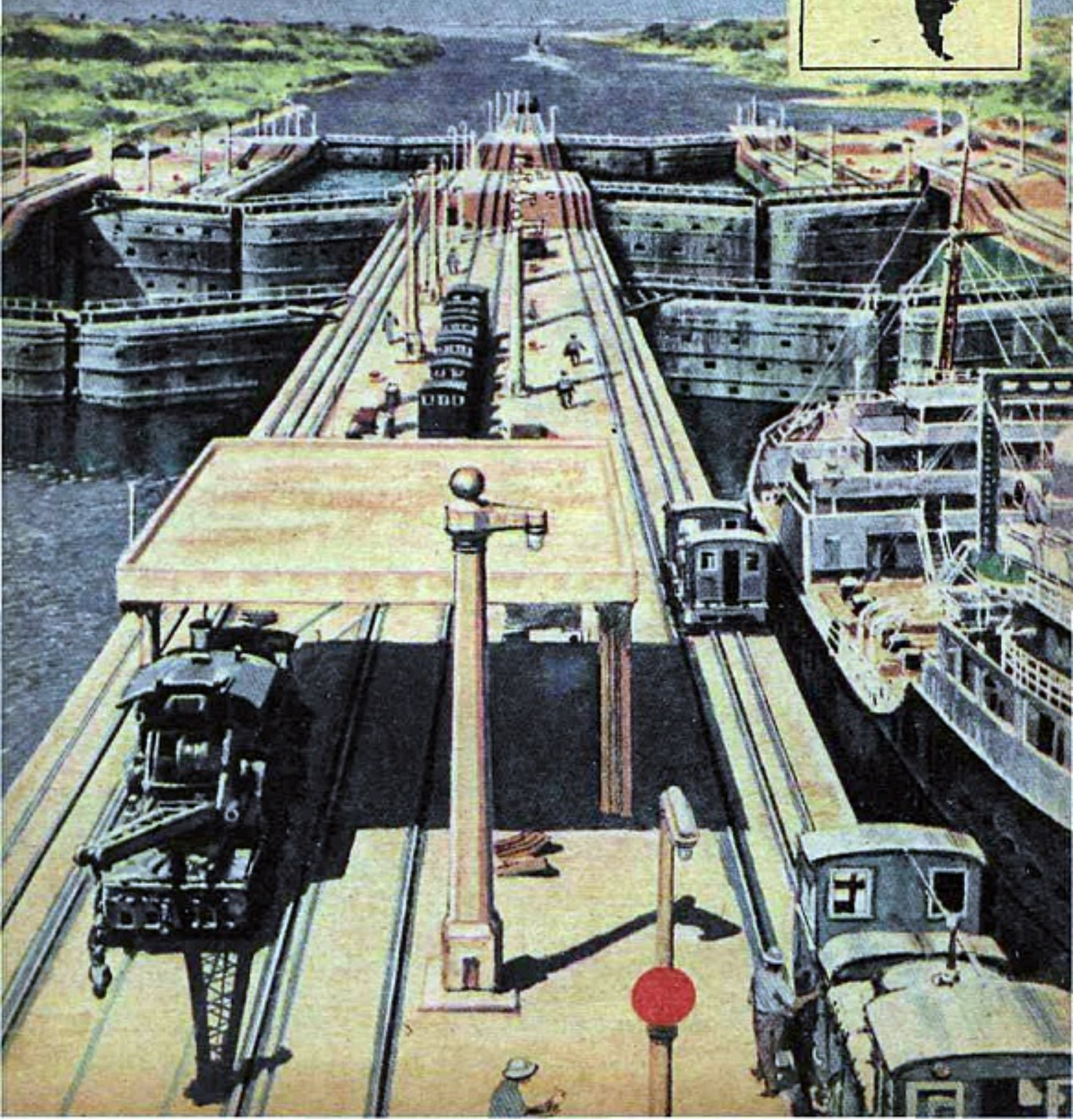


Imprisoned in the castle, Daedalus and Icarus made two pairs of giant wings with wax, and flew away.



Unfortunately, Icarus went closer to the sun. The wax melted. He fell in the sea and was drowned. Daedalus reached Sicily.





MAN-MADE MARVELS

THE CANAL THAT CONQUERED A WILDERNESS

Before the American engineers dared tackle the challenging task of digging the Panama Canal, they had first to rid the jungle area of two great hazards.

When Christopher Columbus's man shouted that he had seen a light in the distance and the Santa Maria, the ship of Columbus, finally touched the coast of Florida, the great explorer had no means of knowing that he had come up against a huge natural barrier. That barrier was to be the end of his dream of finding a western route from Europe to Cathay.

Today, no one is daunted by the size of North and South America, but to the early navigators the presence of this enormous coastline meant only one thing. For anyone wishing to pass from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific, the only route was round storm-swept Cape Horn.

It was a long route and a dangerous one. Sailors all over the world began to ask themselves the same question: If

nature had failed to provide a waterway between the two Americas, might it not be possible to construct one?

Studied on a map, the task did not seem all that difficult. The two Americas were joined by no more than an insignificant looking strip of land called the Isthmus of Panama.

As early as 1550, the Portuguese navigator, Antonio Galvao, published a plan for cutting a canal across the 64-km-wide link. A year later a Spaniard urged King Philip to undertake the work.

Negotiations were lengthy. At last the Columbian government, who controlled the Isthmus, agreed that work should go ahead. A company was formed. The project was put into the hands of the man who had proved his ability in digging the Suez



Canal, Ferdinand de Lesseps.

For de Lesseps who was old, unqualified and wary of more technically accomplished men, the task proved too much. Failing strength, corruption within the company and sickness among his workmen combined to defeat him.

The company became bankrupt and de Lesseps died, worn out by the magnitude of the project and disillusioned by the bitterness that had brought an end to the scheme.

The Two Great Hazards

It was not until 1904 that the United States were able to obtain a grant of land 15 kilometres wide across the Isthmus.

President Theodore Roosevelt found that here was a task that required the kind of discipline only possible with an army. He handed the work over to his military engineers.

The troops were not happy with the work. At that time the Isthmus was one of the unhealthiest areas in the world.

The planning and construction of the Panama Canal was the work of 50-year-old Colonel George Washington Goethals, a brilliant military engineer with an outstanding record of work on waterways and harbours behind him. Even so, it is doubtful if he would have succeeded at Panama had it not been for his medical officer, Colonel William Gorgas. This was the man who was faced with the apparently impossible task of keeping a work-force of 50,000 men healthy in an area that was notorious for malaria and yellow fever—the two great hazards.

Colonel Gorgas wasted no time. Aware of the recent discovery that yellow fever was transmitted by the *Stegomyia* mosquito, he set about the total destruction of its breeding grounds. Ditches were sealed or filled in, swamps were drained

and every pool was covered with a film of oil. Undergrowth was cut down and burned.

The task was immense. Locks had to be constructed by which ships could be lifted from the Atlantic entrance to Gatun Lake, a lagoon formed by damming a river, and a further series of locks were then necessary to allow the ships to descend to the level of the Pacific.

The work entailed the excavation of 183 million cubic metres of rock and earth, and the outlay of a staggering sum in those days, 150 million pounds. Nevertheless, when the new waterway was opened on 3rd August, 1914, the United

States government had the satisfaction of knowing that it had brought about the greatest ship canal on earth.

Before entering a lock, every ship had to pass a chain that dropped automatically into a groove at the bottom of the channel if the vessel was travelling at a permissible speed.

Should a ship be travelling too fast, the chain remained where it was, playing itself out slowly until the ship was brought to a halt. Once inside the lock, ships were towed by engines called travelling "Mules".

The Panama Canal remains a marvel of engineering that is as impressive today as it was in 1914.

SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES



Meeting At Calcutta

It was a bright day when Ravi and Raman, along with Mr. Singh and the Sadhu, were back in Delhi. The Sadhu, of course, was soon to return to the Himalaya. They spent a night at the residence of Dr. Murty, Raman's father. Next day Ravi had to leave for Bhopal, his home-town.

Ravi and Raman prepared to part with heavy hearts. It was mere chance that had brought them together. But now it seemed to both that they had known each other intimately for ages!

Both even dreamt the same dreams at their last night together—of the snow-clad peaks, rivers gushing through gigantic rocks, and they trekking along.

"Do you know? It is said that chance is the pseudonym of God which he uses when he does not wish to put down His signature!" observed the Sadhu. He hastened to add, "But not all sorts of chances. If I wish to steal and chance leads me to someone's fat purse, I should not think that it was God's wish. It is only when we have good intentions—or when we are just



innocent, that beneficent chances may meet us."

Ravi and Raman nodded. The train whistled and started off. Raman wiped his eyes as Ravi waved to him for the last time before his bogie disappeared at a turn.

* * *

Imagine Raman's happiness when the train entered the platform carrying Ravi back to him. That was almost a year later. Dr. Murty had come over to Calcutta. Needless to say, a fortnight did not pass without Ravi writing to Raman and Raman to Ravi. Ravi was at last coming to spend his summer vacation with Raman.

The friends clasped each other's hands as Ravi got down from the train. After they had exchanged enough pleasant words, Ravi observed, "Your Howrah station is like any other large station—so crowded!"

"True. But you cannot say the same thing about Howrah Bridge. It is unlike any other bridge!" said Raman. And, once outside the spacious station building, at the very first sight of the gigantic bridge that spanned the Hooghly river, Ravi realised how true Raman was.

"This is awesome!" Ravi exclaimed.

"This is one of the most magnificent bridges in the world.



Its tower rises to 280 feet. Its length measures to 2,150 feet," informed Raman.

Their taxi proceeded along the bridge slowly. Although the bridge was 71 feet wide and there were six lines laid for the various vehicles to run—apart from two tramways—the space was crowded. Men and women walked briskly on the two foot-paths at the edges of the bridge.

Below the bridge, to their right, they saw a cluster of large boats. On the other side stood the huge city glistening in the mellow sunlight and a thinning fog.

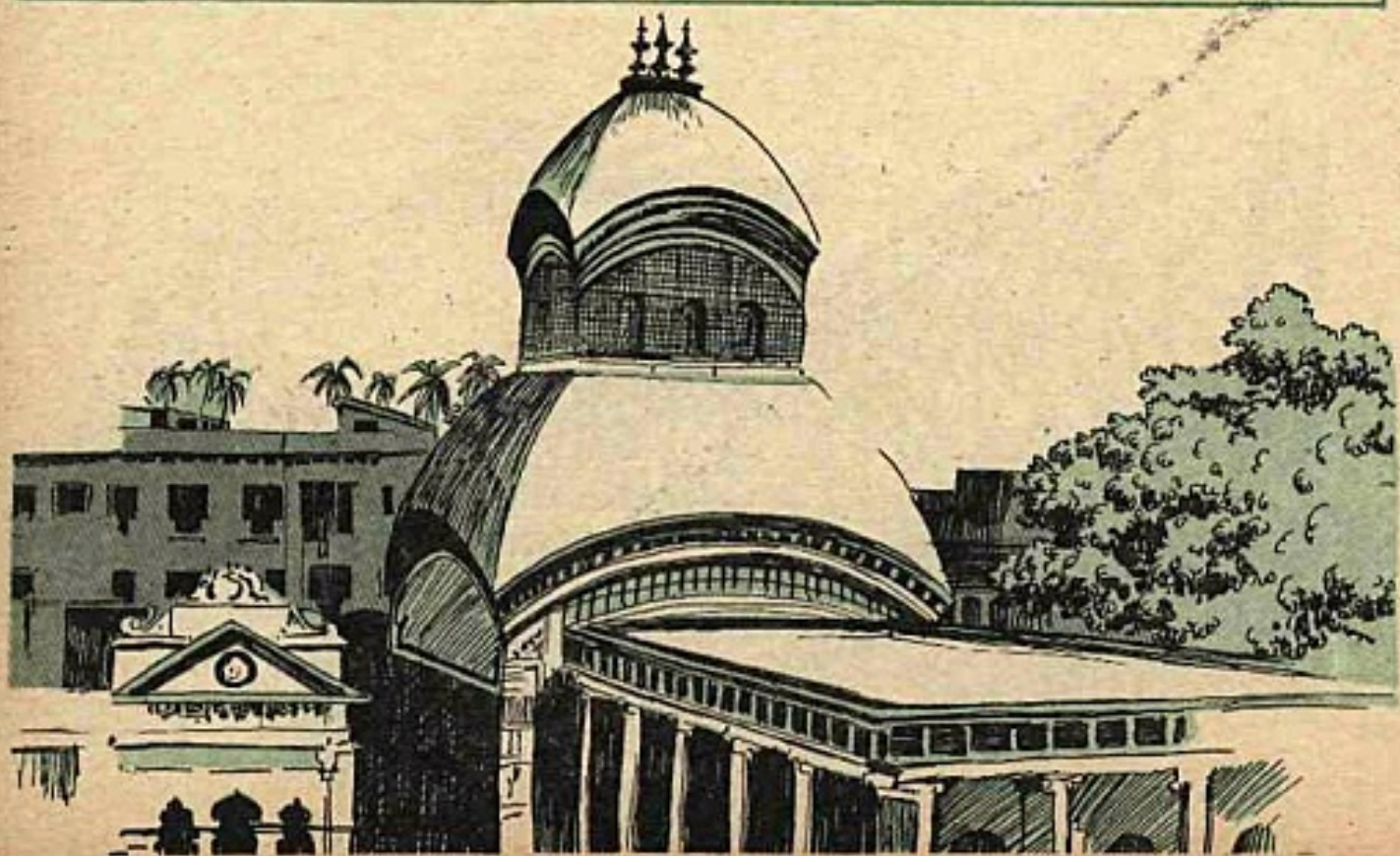
The taxi plied through Chowringhee. The fashionable

shops were yet to open. To their right was a vast grassy meadow, known as the Maidan. It did not take them long to reach their destination—a house on Shakespeare Sarani—previously known as the Theatre Road.

Raman's parents were immensely happy to see Ravi.

"I am to visit a friend near Kalighat. If you so wish, you can accompany me and see the famous temple of Kali," said Dr. Murty, Raman's father, in the afternoon.

"Go, boys, go. Ravi's Calcutta-Darshan should begin with the temple of Kali, for she is the presiding deity of the city,"



commented Mrs. Murty.

On the way Dr. Murty told the boys, "You know the story of *Daksha Yajna*—how Sati, Shiva's consort, shocked at her father's tirade against Shiva, died. Shiva then picked up her body and, the body lying on his shoulder, roamed about totally forgetful of everything.

"Vishnu had to apply his *Sudarsana Chakra*, the weapon in the form of a whirling wheel, to cut Sati's dead body asunder. Her limbs were scattered all over the land. It is believed that a toe fell in the Ganga that flows by.

"Ages passed. A poor Brahmin named Atmaram one day

found the toe lying under the transparent flow. It had by then been transformed into stone. He carried it to the shore. The place was a jungle. He installed the toe inside an image and built a hut over it. He worshipped the image regularly.

"Years later a landlord happened to see the deity. He built a nice temple for the goddess. By and by the place became famous. In fact, Calcutta derives its name from the deity's place, Kali Ghat or Kali Kshetra."

The boys had to literally push their way towards the entrance of the temple.





*New Tales of King Vikram
and the Vampire*

A QUEER SITUATION

Dark was the night and fearful the atmosphere. Along, with the rumbling of thunder flashes of lightning dazzled the region. Weird faces could be seen.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree and brought the corpse down. However, with the corpse lying astride on his shoulder, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King, are you sure what you are doing is in keeping with a king's duty? It is not unoften that one can see a king acting unlike a king. Take the case of King Nirankush. Listen to his story with attention. That ought to bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: Nirankush was the King over the land of Kunjagarh. The border of the kingdom was marked by a dense forest. One day some

leading men of the tribe that inhabited the forest met the king and said that a giant had come to live in the forest; it was the king's duty to kill him.

The king was astonished at the report. He was under the impression that giants were no longer to be found anywhere. He asked the tribals, "Does the giant harm you?" They replied, "Although he had not yet harmed us he could harm us any day!"

"But how did you know that the creature was a giant? Is he as tall as a palm tree?" asked the king.

"Not quite. Nevertheless, he is tall enough to be a giant. He possesses a giant's strength," replied the tribals.

"Even then I don't understand how you recognised him to be a giant," observed the king.

"Your Majesty! The other day we saw the giant in action. He was eating his food, seated under a tree. All on a sudden a tiger pounced upon him. He took hold of the tiger by its forelegs and swung the beast in the air and then dashed it away at a rock. It died. Who could do such a thing if not a giant?" stated the tribals.

The king reflected on the



situation for a few seconds. He then told the tribals, "My advice is, you continue to live without bothering about the giant. If you are afraid of the creature, I can arrange for your camping outside the forest."

The tribals said that they will convey the king's message to their people and meet him again afterwards.

After the tribals departed, the minister nodded disapprovingly and murmured, "My lord, how can it be wise on our part to let the giant roam about free? A giant which can kill a tiger barehanded is no joke!"

"We kill a tiger when it be-

comes a man-eater. We shall certainly kill the giant the day it proves a menace to the forest-dwellers. Why to worry about it now?" said the king.

"My lord, a giant is a giant. He is the natural enemy of man. Should we let him remain at large?" asked the minister.

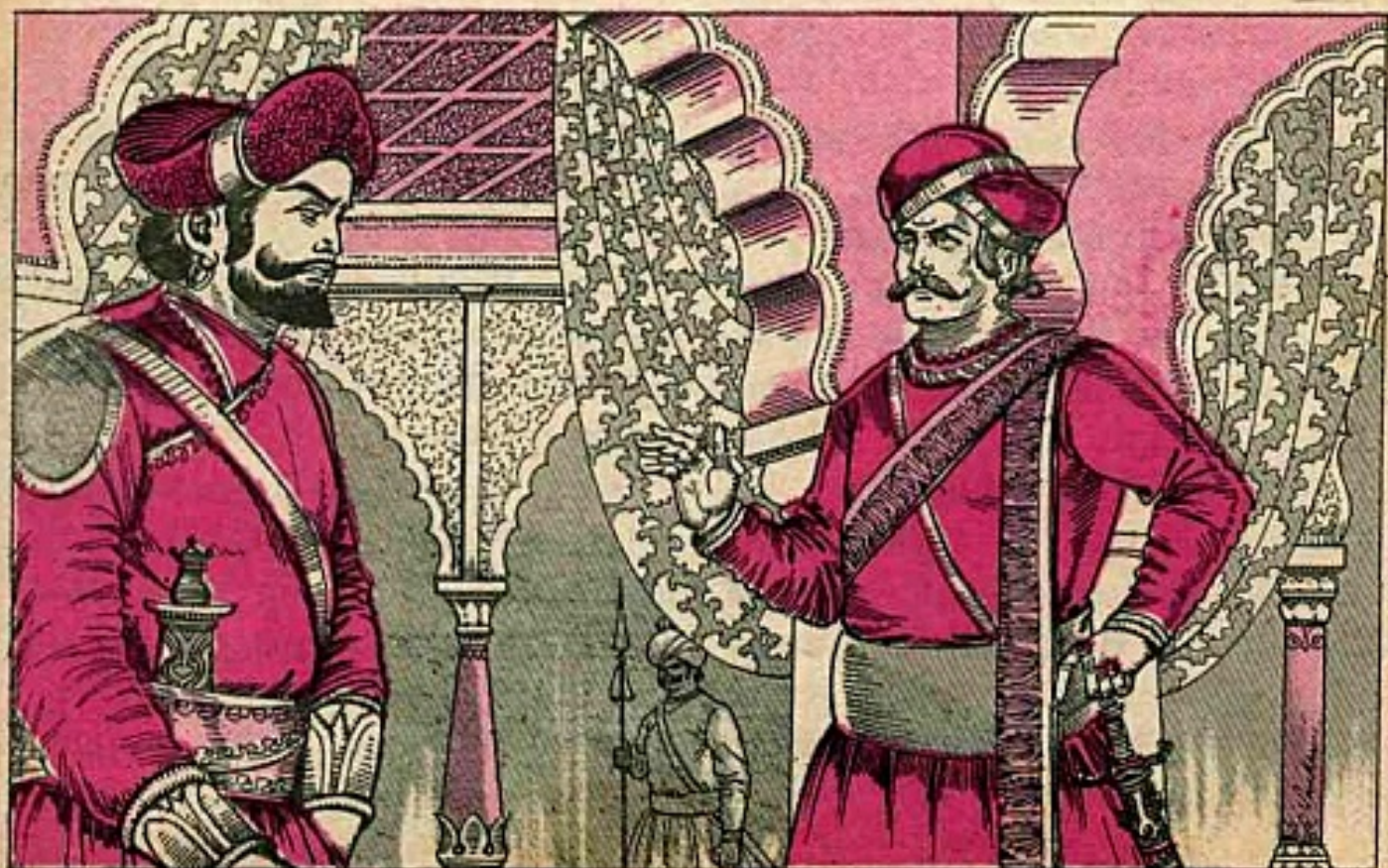
The king smiled and said, "Very well, my minister, please do whatever you deem to be the right thing."

The minister was happy. He at once summoned the general of the army and said, "I understand that a giant is living in our border-forest. Can't you kill him?"

"What doubt is there, Minister, Sir? I'll kill it and have its dead body brought here for all to see," replied the proud general.

The general was an expert warrior and a man of commendable strength and valour. He had killed elephants in the battlefield. Now he was happy to get a chance to vanquish a giant. He took with him a few soldiers and proceeded to the forest.

Before long they found out the giant. He was fighting a tiger. The fearful scene and the roar of the tiger frightened the soldiers. They climbed trees for their



safety.

But the general stood fearless, observing the fight. As soon as the giant throttled the tiger and threw it into a bush, the general unsheathed his sword.

"Why are you here?" asked the giant.

"To kill you," replied the general as he raised his sword.

"Are you sure you are not here to get killed yourself?" asked the giant. Next he gave such a sudden blow to the general that the sword flew off his hand and he fell down.

"Good. You may go," said the giant.

Back in the fort, the general narrated his unusual experience to the minister. The minister hurried to the king and, after reporting the incident to him, asked, "What is to be done in such a queer situation?"

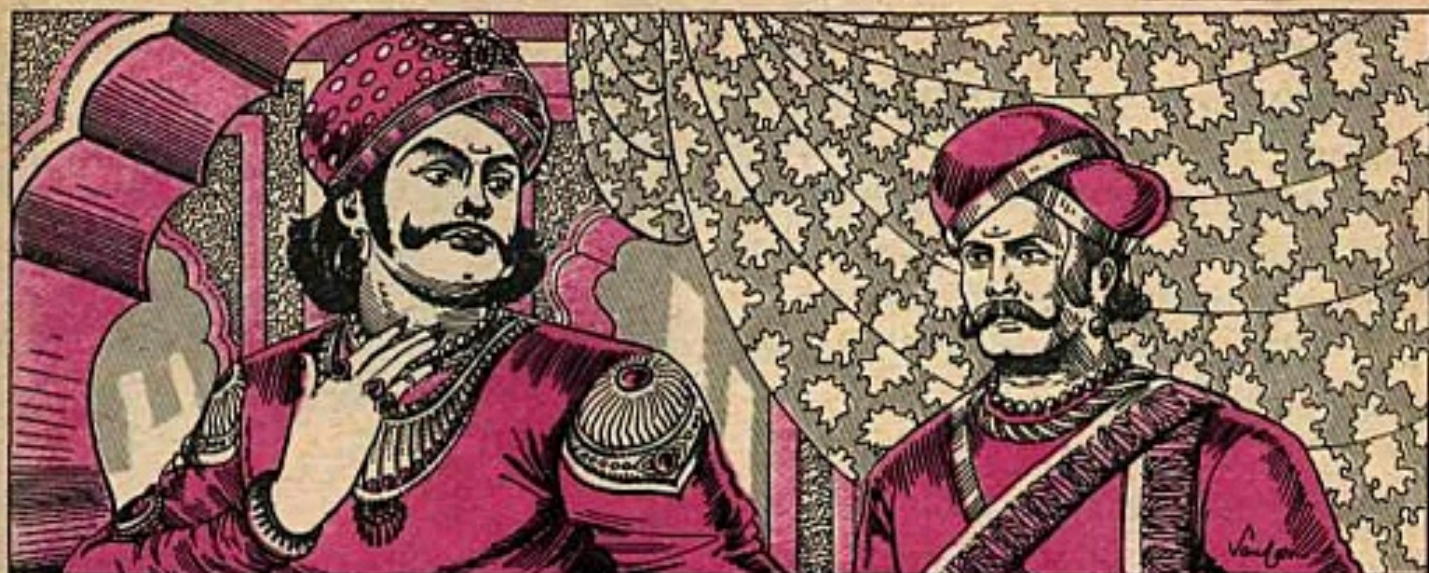
"Nothing!" said the king gravely. "There has been no change in the situation since the tribals met us. I repeat what I said then, let nobody bother about the giant and let nobody bother him."

The vampire paused and challenged King Vikram, "How could the king of Kunjagarh decide to keep his hands off the giant? At first he might not have



realised the menace that was the giant. But how could he declare that the situation had not changed even after his general's humiliation? Is it not foolish of him? O King, answer me if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck!"

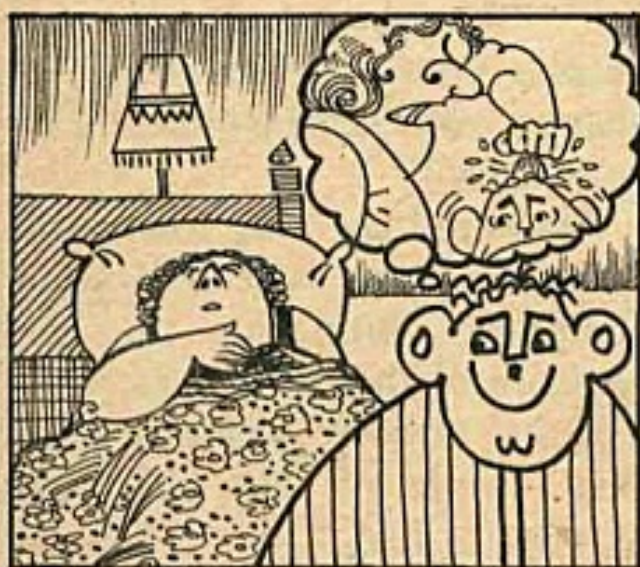
Answered the king forthwith: "The king was wise and conscientious. Supposing that the creature of the forest was really a giant, nobody had any business to harm him as long as he had not harmed anybody. Whoever is superior in strength should not be



looked upon as our enemy. The humiliation of the general must be judged in its proper perspective. The general had gone to kill the giant. Was the giant expected to be courteous towards his would-be murderer? The fact that the giant only disarmed the general and spared his life, shows that

the giant meant no harm to anybody. What the king had thought about the giant proved right. That is why the king said that there had been no change in the situation."

No sooner had King Vikram concluded his answer than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.



It is better to sleep on what you intend doing than to stay awake over what you have done.

—*The Grapevine*, quoted by Bill Gold in *Washington Post*

On both the sides stood high hills. A small mountain brook flowed by. The moon over the hill was growing pale. A few birds had just begun chirping. Morning was not far.

About thirty people sat on a rock. They sat silent but alert. They kept sitting like that since midnight.

"There! He comes!" whispered one.

"At last, at last!" exclaimed another in a suppressed tone.

Groping his way with the

help of a stick someone was descending the hill. He was followed by two others.

Those on the rock below stood up. The man soon came face to face with them.

"I should say that I am sorry to keep you waiting. But that would be formal. Your present inconvenience is nothing in comparison with the troubles you have to take in the near future," said the man. His smile was distinct even in the dusk.

"Yes, leader, we are prepared





to undergo any trouble for the cause of our motherland," buzzed several voices.

They sat down. The leader spoke to them at length. Those who listened to him were hillmen of Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. He had already addressed two more gatherings that very night. For a full year he was roaming the forests and hills—spread over the districts of Visakhapatnam, Krishna and Godavari—talking to the poor people in the hamlets. He was never tired; he was never afraid of danger.

There were many hillmen who believed that he had miraculous

powers; the handcuffs would fall off his hands like a bandage of dry mud; a bullet would strike him no harder than a mosquito!

He was Alluri Sitarama Raju, born in 1897 in West Godavari of Andhra Pradesh.

Indeed, for a long time he passed on as a holy man. He was looked upon as one whose only mission was the religious welfare of the hillmen.

But such ideas about him were not basically wrong. He was holy in his attitude. He impressed upon all his followers that they must not harm anybody personally. So far as his mission was concerned, it was not for the hillmen alone, but for all the people. It was the freedom of the country.

But he had chosen a specific field. He devoted himself to organising the hillmen; to make a militant army of them to fight the British.

"As the ancient children of Mother India, is it not your responsibility to fight for the motherland's freedom? Why should you lag behind other patriots?" he asked the hillmen, inspiring them to rise against the British Raj.

His success was remarkable.

He raised a tribal army of freedom fighters. The British came to know of it. They announced a reward of ten thousand rupees for this mysterious leader's head. They began combing the area for capturing the would-be fighters. But, swift as leopards, Raju's men swooped down upon the police parties, disarmed them and disappeared into the hills and forests.

The officials knew that the hillmen had a powerful leader. But at first they did not know that Raju was the man. He freely moved between the plains and the hills. The British agents tried their best to identify the leader. But Raju's trusted followers would never betray him.

However, the officials suspected Raju's movements. They compelled him to settle down at a place called Paidiputta. They kept a close watch on him.

For one and half years Raju behaved like an innocent cultivator. He sent messages to the hills regularly, but it was done so carefully that those who kept watch on him got no hint of it.

In August 1922 he proposed to visit Nepal. The officials allowed him to go, for they felt sure that he had no hand in the



unrest in the hills.

Instead of going to Nepal, Raju was back among his soldiers! He found that the British officials had been very cruel to the hillmen. Many of his followers had been beaten up and tortured.

With the leader back, the hillmen became militant. They raided the camps of the British Raj. Here and there fights broke out. Always Raju's men came out victorious.

The British officials sat in a conference. They decided to do everything possible to put an end to the growing menace, as soon as possible.

Along with the army units stationed in the South, the Assam Rifles were led to the hills. A thorough search for the rebels was conducted. Raju and his men were camping at Revallu when they were attacked by the army. The rebels had no enough arms with them. In an unequal battle, they lost twelve of their valiant men on the spot. Many more were wounded.

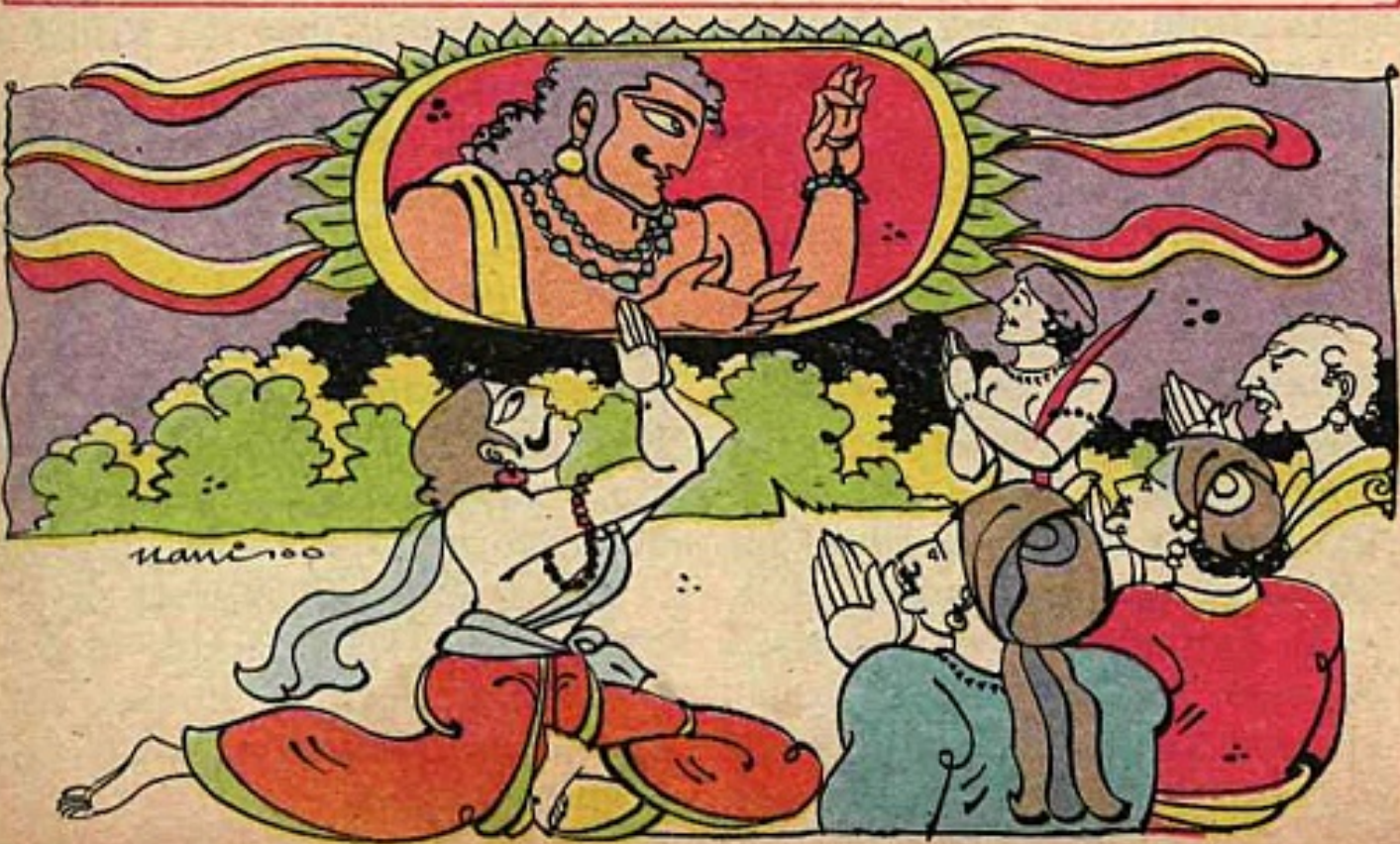
"Halt!" shouted a voice. "Here I am, the man behind the rebels. Arrest me and spare the lives of these patriots!"

The army saw Raju emerging from a hiding. Custom and courtesy should have made them stop firing. But some petty fellow, gleeful at sighting

the enemy leader, cocked his gun at him and pulled the trigger.

The unarmed leader, who had come out to save his followers, fell dead. This was on the 6th of May, 1924.

The rebellion of the hillmen continued even after the death of the fiery leader. Raju's two able lieutenants, Gautam Doray and Mallu Doray, continued to follow the departed leader's ideal. A month later, in another fight, fell Gautam Doray. Mallu Doray was arrested elsewhere and was promptly tried and hanged. That ended a brief but heroic chapter in India's fight for freedom.





STORY OF INDIA — 46 LAST DAYS OF THE BUDDHA

*(Glimpses of the
Buddha's Life - 6)*

The Buddha had two highly worthy disciples: Sariputta and Mogallana. The Buddha had assigned them the task of preaching his doctrine to the people. They camped at two different places.

Years later Sariputta knew that it was time for him to achieve Nirvana. With the Buddha's blessings, he went back to his mother and, after initiating her to Buddhism, passed into Nirvana, at the time of sunrise.



Mogallana incurred the wrath of the conservative religious leaders because his teaching went against them. They appointed an assassin to kill him. But, as the assassin entered his hut, Mogallana, by a miracle, floated up and went beyond the assassin's reach.



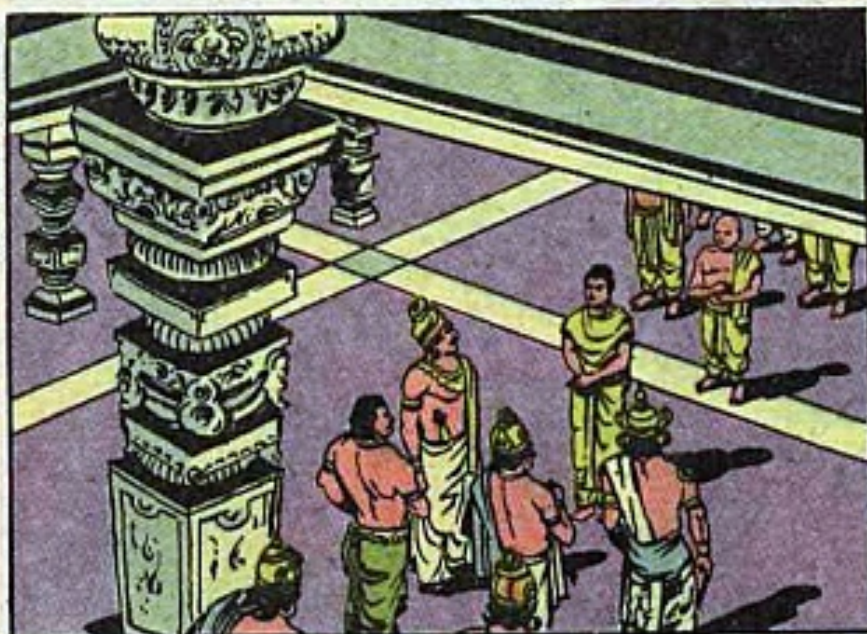
Several times Mogallana protected himself from the assassin by his miracles. But at last, while the assassin was entering with his stick raised, he remembered, in a flash, an incident of his previous life.

In his previous life, he had wanted to get rid of his old parents. He led them into a forest. While they rested, he put on a false beard and attacked them. They shouted, "Son! A bandit is killing us. Run away at once." The parents' concern for him changed his heart.



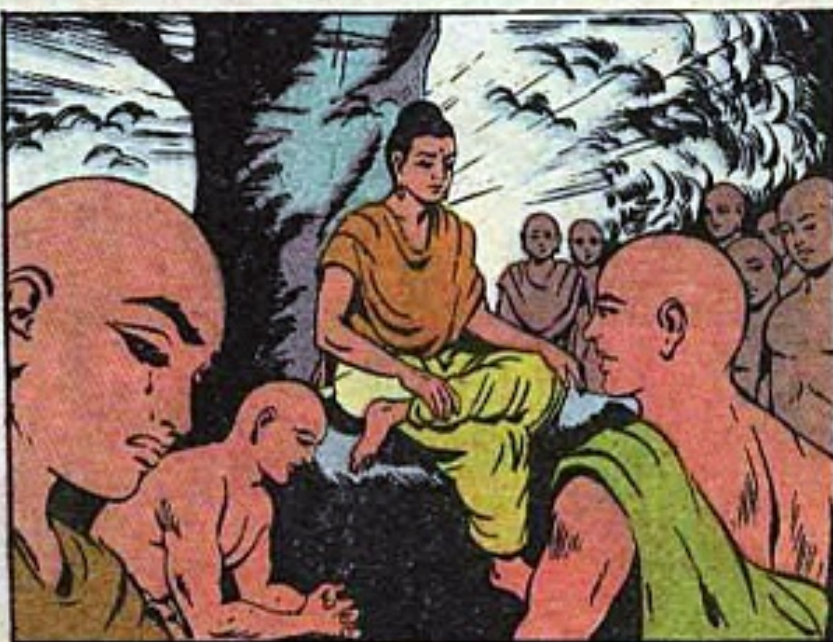
The young man ran away and shed the false beard and led them out of the forest. As he remembered this evil design of his previous life, his miracle did not work. The assassin beat him up and left him for dead. Mogallana dragged himself to the Buddha and died at his feet.

The Buddha was now eighty. One day he reached Vaisali. A charming courtesan named Amrapali came to meet him. She offered him her grove and invited him and his party to dine at her house. The Buddha agreed.



Soon thereafter some nobles met him and invited him to dine with them. They murmured at the Buddha going to dine at a courtesan's. Said the Buddha: "The Ganga and the Krishna are different rivers. But once in the sea, they are no longer different. Nobles and courtesans, once they accept me, are no longer different."

The Buddha called his followers and told them that he would live only for three more months. The followers were sad. But he told them to depend on their own inner guidance, for no guide could last forever.





Nevertheless, the Buddha continued his march. He reached Pava and was received by a disciple called Cunda who was a smith. Cunda, with great love, offered him meat. The Buddha had no heart to refuse, though he knew that it would harm him.

Soon the Buddha took ill. He knew that the moment for his Nirvana had come. He made no secret of it. Crowd around the grove swelled as the news spread. Reclining on his bed, the Buddha continued answering questions from the seekers. When there was no more question, he breathed his last.



The Buddha's message never ceased to spread. Shrines to the Buddha, and caves and monasteries for the monks were constructed all over India and abroad. Conferences were held and numerous plays, poems and treatises on him were written. Buddhism became the world's most widely accepted religion.

A MATTER OF CALCULATION

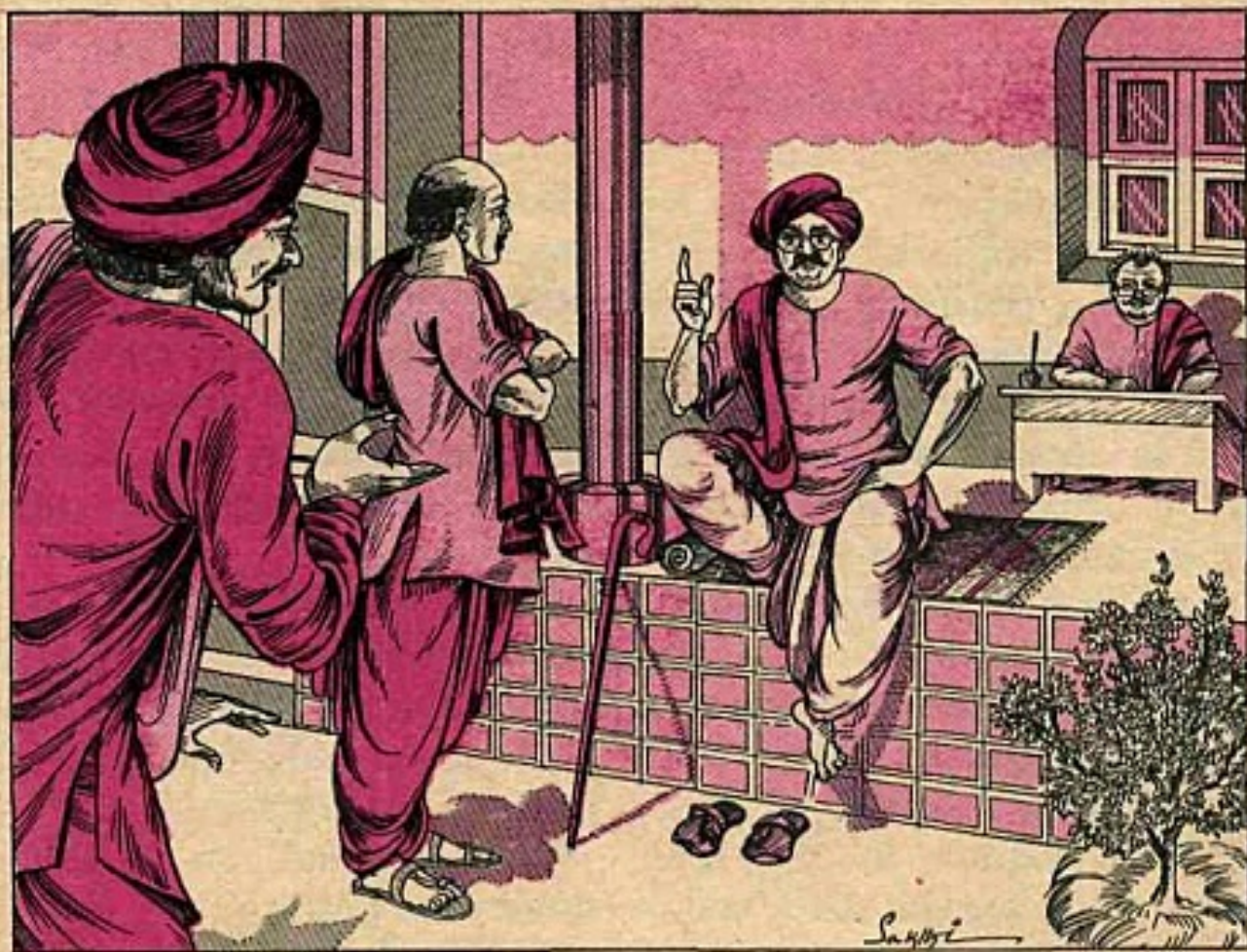
Bipin's son married Mohan's daughter. Bipin extracted ten thousand rupees as dowry from Mohan.

Ten years later Mohan married off his second daughter with a dowry of fifteen thousand rupees.

"In what way was my son inferior that you paid me ten thousand? I am no naive at calculation. You owe me five thousand more," claimed Bipin.

Mohan did not know what to say. The case went to the village chief. The chief called Bipin and said, "You had received ten thousand rupees ten years ago. With interest the sum now amounts to twenty thousand. Granting you the five thousand you demand, you owe Mohan five thousand rupees. Do you appreciate my calculation?"

Bipin stood, his head hung.





THE MAGICIAN GROCER

Mahendrapur was a prosperous village. Near the village was situated a small bazar. There the biggest grocery shop was owned by Jeewan.

Often the customers found the stuff they bought from Jeewan's shop quite inferior. They also found that such stuff weighed less when measured by the buyers at their own homes. But if anybody complained about it, Jeewan made such a sweet and fluent speech that the complainant felt sure it would be hard to find another trader as honest as Jeewan.

From time to time many people told the village chief that they had been deceived by Jeewan. He wanted to see for himself what Jeewan really did. One evening he went to Jeewan's shop. Jeewan welcomed him.

"What can this humble shopkeeper do for you, sir?" he asked with hands folded.

"I want some ghee," said the chief, "I hope, you can give me."

"Why have I opened a shop if I can't?" asked Jeewan. He entered an ante-room and came out with three of his fingers outstretched.

"Sir, please smell my fingers dipped in three different tins, one after another, and point out to me the smell you relish most," he said.

The chief smelled the fingers but could not differentiate among the smells.

"I don't understand the difference," he confessed.

"Never mind, sir, I understand for you! You'd like to have the ghee of the finest quality, won't you? Though that

would be slightly costlier," said Jeewan sporting a genial smile.

"That's right. But do you mean to say that you have ghee of three qualities?" asked the chief.

"I must be frank with you. The finest quality of ghee is meant for men of quality like you. The second quality too is very good. In fact, what other shop-keepers brand as the finest quality is not as good as my second quality. The third quality is not bad either, though a bit inferior. You know, sir, that the common people would like to have things cheap! But I do not desire to hide anything

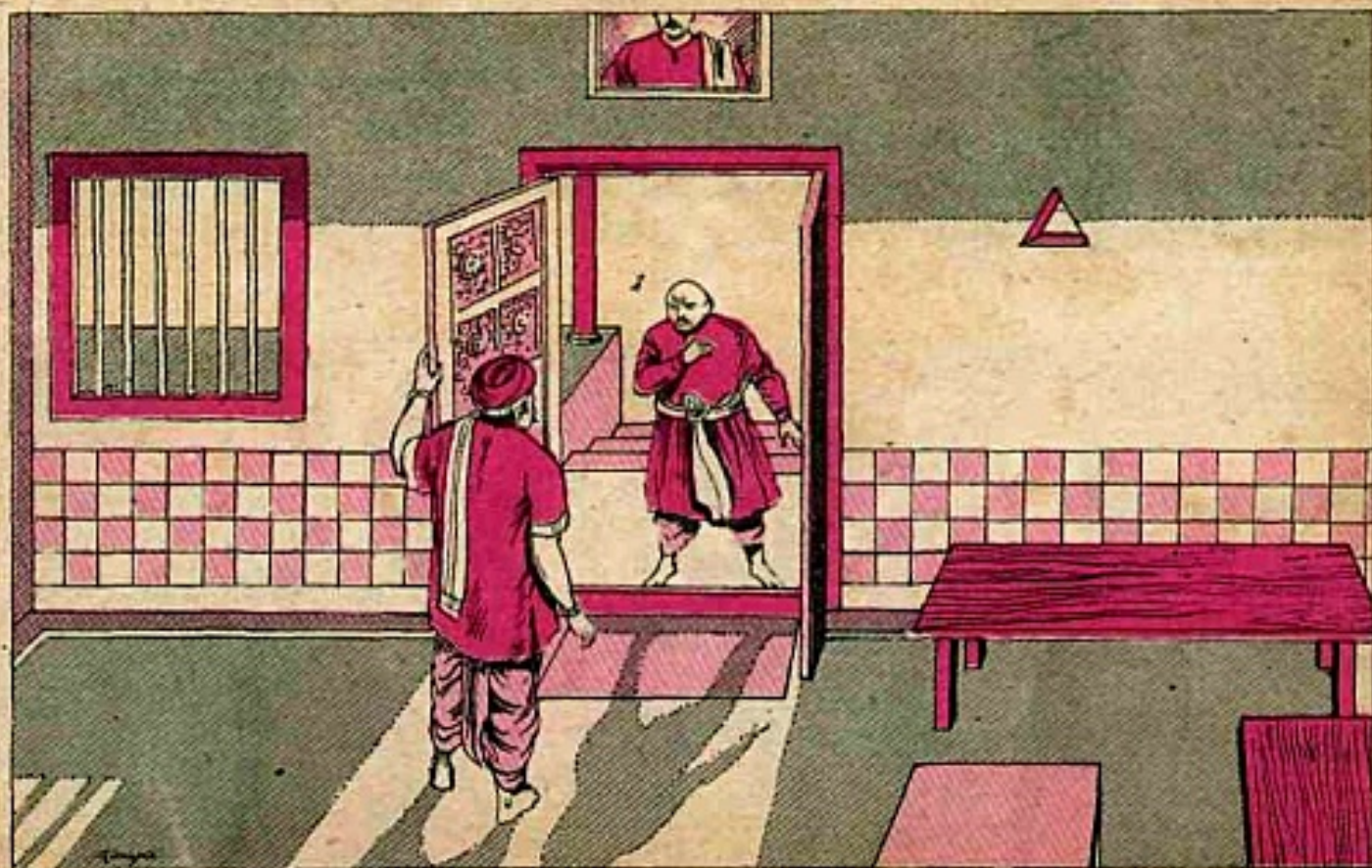
from you!" said Jeewan.

The chief was so charmed by Jeewan's frank talk that he felt guilty for having suspected him! He bought the ghee of the first quality and went away.

"Sir, never have I deceived anybody or have adulterated the stuff I sell," was the grocer's final statement.

There was some commotion at midnight.

A villager spied upon a gang of burglars and raised a cry. Some people were rehearsing a play in the club house. They chased the burglars. The gang fled, leaving behind them their booty: a tin of ghee, a bag of



rice, a bag of pulse and some weighing stones.

The villagers recovered the things and deposited them at the chief's house. It was found that the weighing stones weighed less and the rice and the pulse contained sand and small stones.

Early in the morning Jeewan met the chief and reported that it was his shop that had been burgled.

"What have you lost?" asked the chief.

"A tin of ghee, a bag of rice, a bag of pulse and my weighing stones," said Jeewan.

"No doubt, we have recovered such things from the burglars. We have to be only sure that they are yours. Come on, let's go to your shop.

The two reached the shop.

"Where are the other two tins?" asked the chief.

"Sir?" fumbled the grocer.

"You stored ghee of three different qualities in three tins, isn't that so? We have found one tin. Where are the other two?"

Jeewan hemmed and hawed. He was trying to cook up an answer.

"Jeewan! You must be a magician to whip out three different kinds of ghee from a single tin! Then there is the question of your weighing stones and the strange presence of sand in the rice and pulse."

Jeewan stood sweating.

"Look here, Jeewan, you spoke blatant lies to me yesterday that Providence decided to expose you forthwith. Wind up your business and leave the village, before the villagers decide to boycott you," said the chief.



THE DAMSEL OF KASHMIR

"What a marvellous picture!" exclaimed a young man looking at a portrait that adorned the house of his friend.

"This is a fine picture, indeed," agreed the friend.

The young man kept gazing at the picture for a long time. He came to his friend's house again the next day to gaze at it. "I love this picture," he confessed and he asked, "Whose portrait is this?"

"I don't know whether this is drawn after any living damsel

or is a product of the artist's imagination," replied his friend.

The artist's house was not far. Both the friends met him and enquired about the inspiration behind the picture.

"On my visit to the land of Kashmir, I had come across a dancing girl. She was in the service of one of the ministers of the king. With the minister's permission I made her sit before me and drew this portrait," informed the artist.

The young man, under a





strange whim, set out for Kashmir. It took him a long time to reach the capital-city of the land. He resided in an inn and soon cultivated friendship with a courtier.

"What sort of man is your king?" he asked the courtier.

"He is just and noble. He can pardon any crime, but not sorcery. Whenever a sorcerer or a witch is caught, he throws him or her into a dungeon outside the city and locks it up. After the wicked one is dead, the deadbody is thrown from the hill-top into the jungle for the beasts to make a merry feast of it," the courtier informed

him.

The young man also found out who among the king's ministers was particularly fond of dance and music. The minister maintained a few dancing girls and arranged for their performances for the pleasure of the king and the nobility.

By and by the young man also extracted a description of the most beautiful dancing girl in the minister's service. The description matched with the portrait.

In a few days the young man located the minister's mansion and the rear block of the building where the dancing girls lived.

It was a stormy night. Sharp wind, mixed with snow, beat the city like sharp whips. The city was lying prostrate under the menacing clouds.

The young man braved the weather after dressing himself up like a bandit. He held a dagger and climbed the wall around the rear block of the minister's mansion.

Usually the block was guarded by a watchman or two. But who would remain in the open in such a terrible night? The watchmen were sure that no thief would come out of his home that night.

With the help of a rope the young man descended into the courtyard and peeped in through the windows. There lay asleep the beautiful girl—in one of the rooms, a candle burning at her head.

A thunder cracked. The young man took advantage of the loud report and gave a violent push to the door. It gave way.

The girl had just woken up. Her eyes bulged with fear at the young man's sight.

Silently the young man made a motion with his sharp dagger and cut off a thick lock of the girl's dark hair.

"Don't kill me," appealed the girl in a subdued voice, afraid to shriek aloud. "If you want wealth, here it is—the most precious ornament I had ever had," she said, bringing out a diamond necklace from under her pillow.

The young man slipped out with the lock and the necklace.

The cyclone stopped in the morning. The young man now donned the garb of a holy man and entered the king's court.

"My lord, I am a travelling mendicant from a faraway land. When I reached the gate of your city last night the gate had already been shut. As you



know, it was a stormy night. I took shelter under a rock outside the city. Suddenly what should I see before me but three witches, one riding a broomstick and the other a cat as dark as the night, and the third one a wine-jar.

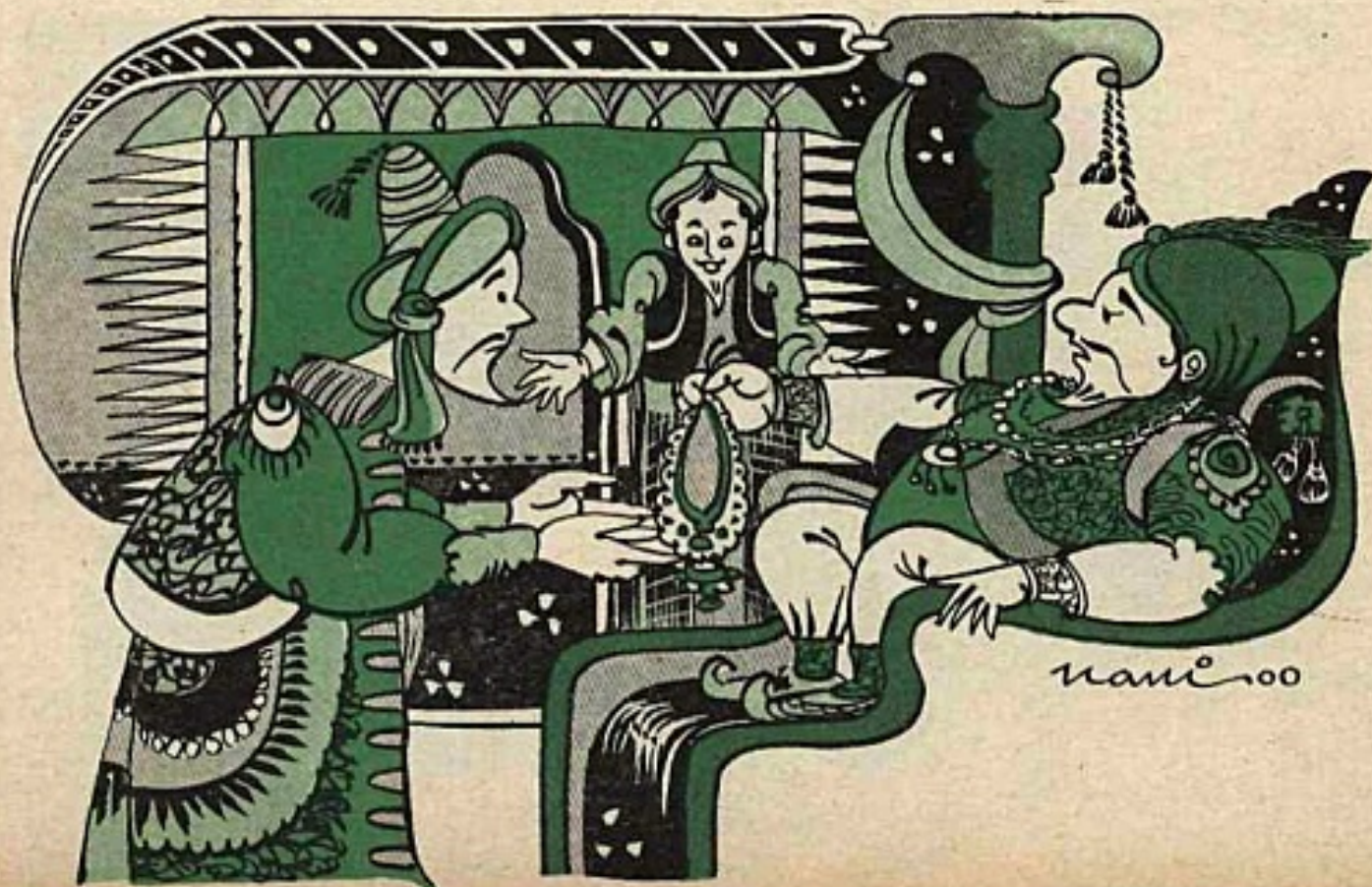
"Who is this fellow hiding here?" said one of them as she kicked me hard. Luckily, I knew an incantation meant for scaring away witches. As soon as I began reciting it, the witches scampered off, but not before I had caught hold of the hair of one of them and a necklace she wore. They remained in my grip. Here they are, my

lord. I thought it proper to bring the incident to your notice," said the young man.

"Bravo, young mendicant!" exclaimed the king. Then looking at the necklace, he shouted out in surprise, "Is this not the one I gave to your dancing girl the other night?" He put the question to a minister.

"It is so, my lord," said the minister, passing his eyes on the necklace.

"Hm!" The king sat thoughtful for a moment. Then he ordered the dancing girl to be brought to the court immediately.



She was brought there. It was found that a bunch of her hair was missing. The lock the mendicant had produced matched hers.

"Who would have believed that such a charming girl would be a witch!" remarked the king with a sigh.

The girl, who did not understand the accusation, broke into sobs.

"Shut up!" thundered the king. "Witches deserve no mercy!"

The girl fainted. She was dumped in the dungeon in that condition.

In the evening the young man

walked towards the dungeon and sat down near the guard. Nobody ever came to chitchat with the guard of the witches' dungeon! The guard was happy to talk to the young man.

The young man told him all about his adventure and gave him a hundred gold coins. The guard allowed him to take the damsel out of the dungeon and to escape with her.

In the morning the guard reported to the king, "My lord, what a witch she was! She flew away at midnight riding her black cat as I looked on helpless!"





A Tale from the Panchatantra

THE TIGER'S PENANCE

As soon as the traveller saw the tiger his natural impulse was to run. But he realised that the tiger was too old to attack him. He stopped and looked at the bangle. It was big enough and it seemed to be of solid gold.

"Why do you offer me the bangle?" the traveller asked.

"Why do people do charity? To earn religious merit. The same is the motive with me,"

A lone traveller was passing through a forest. Upon the bank of a pool sat an old tiger.

"Hello, traveller, why don't you take a dip in the pool and receive this gold bangle from me?" asked the tiger.



replied the tiger.

The traveller felt tempted. Still he could not muster the courage to receive the bangle from the ferocious beast.

"I am not unwilling to contribute to your religious merit by receiving the bangle. But you are a man-eater, after all. How to trust you?" asked the man.

"Only if you could read my heart, O good man! There is nothing there save goodwill for all. I must confess that I used to devour human beings causing sorrow to their families. But that is a matter of the past. I repent for those sinful actions. It is precisely to atone for them that I am following a rigid discipline. Giving away gifts is a part of my penance," said the tiger eloquently.

The traveller came closer to the pond. The tiger looked

happy. "Have a bath and feel pure. That is the right way to receive a gift," said the tiger.

The traveller entered the water. He had taken only a step or two when he found his legs stuck in the deep gum-like mud. As he struggled to free his legs, they only went deeper.

"What is the matter? You've got stuck, have you? Don't fret. I'll rescue you," said the tiger and it laughed.

The traveller looked at the tiger. It looked sinister. Its face betrayed its motive.

"What a fool I was!" wailed out the traveller. "Even the moon that wanders in the sky cannot escape the demon, Rahu. How could I think that I was safe with a tiger? It is my greed that is bringing me death!"

The tiger pulled the traveller out of the mud and killed him.



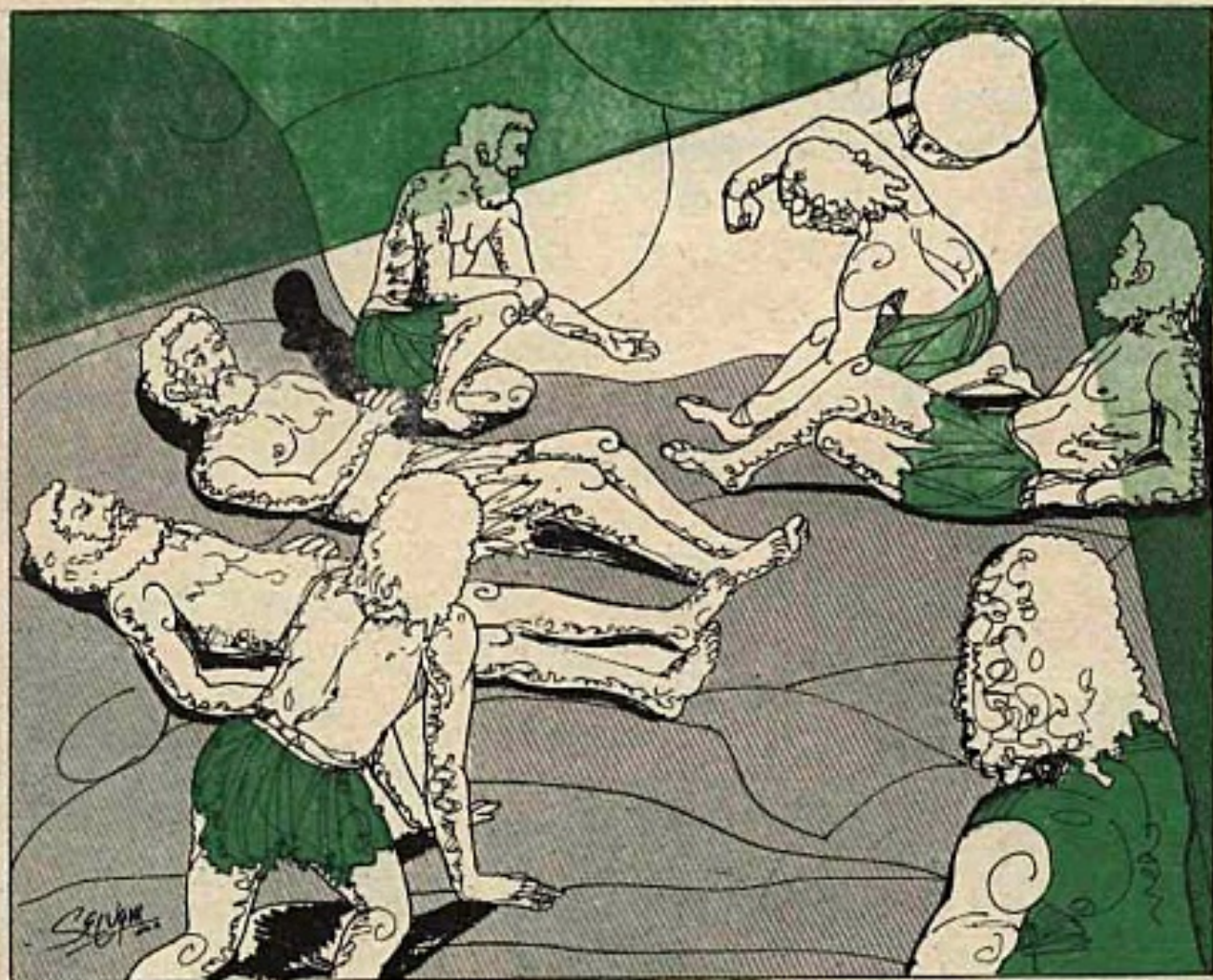
THE SEVEN SLEEPERS

In A. D. 3rd century, Decius was the emperor of Rome. He persecuted the Christians. To escape his tyranny, seven young noblemen slipped into a spacious cavern. Decius sealed the mouth of the cavern so that they would perish. Soon sleep overtook them.

Time passed. Some people were breaking stones when sunlight entered the cavern. The seven friends woke up. They felt hungry. One of them went to the town to buy bread. His strange clothes and the old coin he offered surprised the baker. Soon the authorities came to know of it. Emperor Theodosius and many others rushed to the cavern. The Seven Sleepers narrated their story and died peacefully then and there.

They had slept for 230 years!

Is this a fable? But this is believed to have happened.



Mangoes At Command

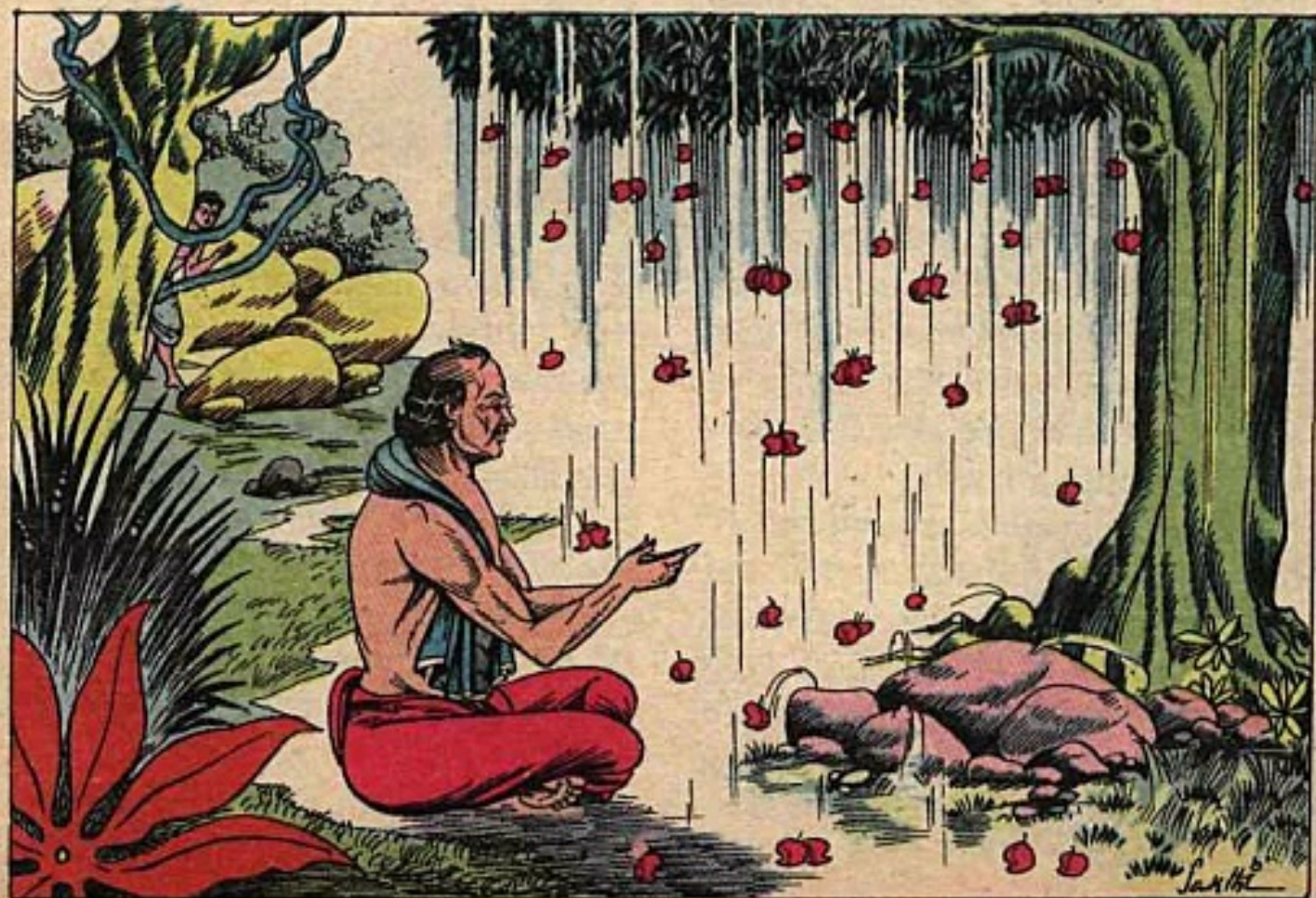
In a small village in a hilly area lived an old man who knew a strange hymn. Everyday, early in the morning, he would go over to a lonely nook of the valley and stand before a mango tree. Then, touching the tree, he would recite the hymn. Lo and behold, a hundred mangoes would pop up in the tree. As he would look on, the fruits would ripen and fall down. He would collect them in a sack.

Back at home the old man

kept a few mangoes for his own family; the rest he distributed among the poor folk of the village.

A very few people knew about his miracle. Those who knew did not speak about it to anybody. The old man had forbidden them to talk about it.

A Brahmin young man was passing through the valley. He had been a student of a renowned scholar. But he failed to learn anything. The scholar told





him, "My boy, no use wasting time here. Better go back home and help your father in his work."

So the young man was returning home. He had no guide. He strayed into the nook of the valley and passed the night in a cave. In the morning, unknown to the old man, he saw him performing the miracle.

The young man sprang out of the cave and fell flat at the old man's feet. The old man was taken aback. He took a step backward and said, "How are you doing such a thing, young man? You seem to be a Brahmin. I am a man of a low

caste. I'd become a sinner if I let you touch my feet!"

But the young man wouldn't even lift up his head. He mumbled on, his forehead still touching the ground, "O Savant, kindly teach me the hymn that yielded you the instant mangoes!"

"I'm no savant, young man, but a poor illiterate villager. It was through the compassion of a Rishi that I learnt the hymn. He has not permitted me to teach the hymn to many, but to only one, before my death," explained the old villager.

"Let that one be myself. Kindly accept me as your disciple," the young man pleaded with the villager. He had got up, but he stood with his hands folded.

"Young man, I'm not sure if you are fit enough to learn the hymn. One who would practise it must observe two rules. He must not make any profit out of the fruits. Secondly he must not utter a lie," said the old villager.

"I agree to abide by the rules, O Savant, please do not disappoint me," insisted the young man.

The old man was kind-hearted. He still tried to avoid the

young man, but the latter fell on the ground again and threatened to clutch at his feet. Now, the old man did not wish to be a sinner by allowing a Brahmin to do that. He had to teach the hymn to the young man.

The young man thanked the villager profusely. Next morning he tried the hymn on a mango tree. It worked. He ate up as many mangoes as he could—sweeter ones than them he had never known—and he carried the rest home.

"We never expected you before a year!" exclaimed the young man's parents when they saw him. "I hope, you learnt your lessons well?" asked his father.

"Ha ha! I've learnt much more than any chap you know could have learnt," boasted the young man.

His father kept quiet, not quite sure of the talent his boy claimed for himself. But when the boy performed the miracle the next morning, he was wonder-struck.

The family consumed all the hundred mangoes on the first day. On the second day they ate half and distributed the other half.

On the third day there was the



sitting of the weekly market near the village. The boy and his father sold the mangoes there. From the next day onward they were not required to carry the mangoes anywhere. People who had tasted them crowded before their house to buy them.

The fame of the mangoes grew. Along with that the young man grew rich. By and by people learnt about the miracle by which the mangoes were born. They took the young man to be a yogi. They showed him great respect. He quite relished his new status. The people consulted him on their



problems and he advised them like one who knew everything!

Two years passed. One early morning two royal officers got off their horses in front of the young man's house and greeted him.

"We are from the king. You are invited to the court," they said.

"Is the king having any problem?" the young man asked proudly.

"We don't think so. He would perhaps like to know a gifted man like you better," answered the officers.

"Very well." The young man put on his best clothes and rode

a nice horse he had lately purchased and galloped forth, escorted by the two officers.

The king received him with courtesy and asked, "Young man, we are proud to have a subject who can produce mangoes all the year round. Will you tell us how you got such a power?"

"My lord," replied the young man, coughing and assuming seriousness, "I got it from a great yogi high in the Himalaya, after a strenuous meditation lasting five years at a stretch!"

"Indeed," muttered the king, as if impressed by the young man's claim. "Now let us see you perform the miracle."

The king walked towards the garden, holding the young man by the hand. That meant a great favour. The ministers and courtiers followed. The gardener brought a casket knit out of silver wires to collect the mangoes.

The young man touched the mango tree that looked most healthy and recited his hymn. He did so twice—thrice—a dozen times, his eyes bulging with despair, but not a single fruit came out.

"What's the matter, young

man?" asked the king.

"My lord, I don't understand why the hymn does not work," the young man stammered out.

"I had a hunch that you were lying. You don't look like one who meditated in the Himalaya for five years. Were you doing some black magic? Speak out or you die!" roared the king.

The young man broke into tears and confessed that he had learnt the hymn from a poor old villager of low caste—by chance! He narrated how it happened.

"Your guru had asked you to observe two rules: not to make profit and not to utter a

lie. Providence excused you your violating the first rule. But when you proved ungrateful to your guru, that was too much. Go and beg your guru his pardon. May be, the hymn will work again," observed the king.

The young man went to the old villager of the valley and sought his mercy. The old man was sorry, but he excused his unlucky disciple. Even then the hymn did not work for the young man again.

From the Buddha Jatakas.





THE SAGA OF SHIVA

One day Durvasa, the famous sage, was playing with his pet deer at Badarikashram. It so happened that a *Pramatha* called Tumbur was flying by. The *Pramathas* are a type of supernatural beings who are devoted to Lord Shiva. When Tumbur saw the pretty deer he whistled merrily. The poor deer got scared and fled.

Durvasa got angry and looking upward at Tumbur, blurted out, "You behaved like a mischievous human being. Be born as a man!"

Tumbur got down from the sky and bowed to the sage and said, "It is not mischief but a sudden sense of joy at the sight of the deer that made me whistle. I am sorry to have scared away the deer and annoyed you. Since you have already uttered a curse, I know that it is going to

materialise. I have only one prayer. Grant that as a human being I will not forget to pray to Lord Shiva."

Durvasa blessed him saying that he will be an ardent devotee of Shiva even as a human being.

Tumbur was soon born in the family of a merchant. In due course he grew up to be a young man. He married and had a son. But he was famous as a devotee of Shiva. A day did not pass without his feeding a number of devotees of Shiva.

One day a mendicant who chanted the name of Shiva took shelter in his house.

"My noble host, it is my practice to worship Lord Shiva with the offerings of sugar-cane juice. But the juice must be prepared before me and the sugar-canes must be brought

here by my host himself. And I need a big jarful of sugar-cane juice!" said the mendicant.

Tumbur at once went out to collect sugar-canes. To prepare a jarful of juice a large bundle of canes was needed. He gathered the sugar-canes and made them into a bundle but while carrying them home he fainted under the load. But surprisingly, when he open his eyes he found himself in front of his house along with the load.

Just then on the peak of Kailas Parvati saw Shiva wiping sweat off his forehead. "Why do you sweat?" she asked Shiva. "Well I had to carry the load of a devotee, as well as the devotee himself to his home," replied Shiva.

"Who is that lucky devotee? I want to see him," said Parvati with insistence.

* * *

It was noon. Tumbur was waiting for some devotee of Shiva to come to his house. But nobody came. He went to the street to find at least one guest. He asked several people who looked like devotees of Shiva, "Will you be pleased to partake of lunch with me?" But nobody was in a position to oblige him. Disappointed, Tumbur was



returning home. He had decided to go without food himself—when his eyes fell on an old couple resting inside a deserted temple. He had a feeling that they were devotees of Shiva. He entered the temple and requested them to come to his house for food.

Replied the man, "Myself and my wife have not taken a morsel of food for full hundred days. We are under oath that we will touch food only when we can offer human flesh to Lord Shiva."

"Very good. I will offer my flesh," promised Tumbur. The man laughed. "It is not that

easy. I have another condition. The man who would offer to help me in fulfilling my penance must kill his own son and submit the child's meat to me. It is that meat which I will offer to my Lord," he said.

Tumbur stood silent for a moment. Then he said, "Although this is a rather stern condition, I am sure my wife and my son would agree to meet it. Be pleased to follow me."

Tumbur's son was in the school. Some mysterious man met him and whispered to him, "Your father is going to sacrifice you at the insistence of a stranger. Flee, if you would like to escape death."

"Never. If my father intends doing that he must be having sufficient reason for his decision. I know of Shivi and Dadhichi who had no hesitation for sacrificing themselves when it was

necessary. Why should I not follow their example?"

Soon Tumbur came to call his son. On their way home he told the boy the demand of his guest. Said the boy, "Let his demand be fulfilled since he promises to offer my meat to the Lord."

Tumbur's wife suppressed her tears and bathed and fed her son. The son prostrated himself to his parents and sat up ready to be killed. The three turned towards their guests.

What should they see but the vision of Shiva and Parvati before them! They at once fell on the ground and chanted prayers. Shiva and Parvati blessed the three and revealed to them who Tumbur really was. In a short time Tumbur left his human body and resumed living as *Pramatha* with Shiva.





MADIRAWATI'S MARRIAGE

It happened long ago. In the city of Ujjain lived a renowned teacher. Boys from many parts of the land came to learn from him. They resided with him.

Among them were two friends, Vijay and Bhushan. Vijay came from Varanasi and Bhushan came from Indore.

Ujjain was not far from Indore. Bhushan often wrote to his parents about Vijay. Once his mother wrote back to him, "Why don't you bring your friend home?"

At the end of their stay with the teacher, Bhushan took Vijay home with him. Everybody in Bhushan's family took a liking for Vijay. Bhushan's young sister, Madirawati, was no exception.

Vijay sang very well. When he did so, Madirawati sat be-

hind the screen and listened to him, quite charmed.

One day Dharitri, Madirawati's most intimate friend, presented Vijay a garland of jasmine flowers and said, "This is my friend Madirawati's gift to you."

Vijay, who had seen Madirawati several times and had been fascinated by her, was thrilled at the girl's gesture.

"Please tell Madirawati that in return for this garland, I can give her all I have," said Vijay.

That was hint enough! Dharitri understood that Vijay loved Madirawati as much as Madirawati loved him.

After some days Vijay left for Varanasi. He whispered to Madirawati that before long he will be there again, ready to propose his marriage with her.



But Vijay could not come soon. His father died leaving many things half done. He had to devote all his time to set the things right.

At last Vijay set out for Indore. But on reaching the city he heard that Madirawati's marriage was going to be performed the same night. He was shocked.

Madirawati was too shy to speak to her parents of her weakness for Vijay. She was waiting for Vijay's arrival. When he did not come, she thought that he had forgotten her.

Her parents fixed her marri-

age with a bridegroom belonging to their own town. The preparations for the marriage were in full swing.

Vijay roamed about in the vicinity of Madirawati's house. Only if something happened that would break Madirawati's marriage with the local young man! Then he could come forward to marry her. He indulged in such wistful thoughts. Soon he realised how idle such thoughts were. He felt awfully frustrated. Slowly he walked towards a lake. He decided to jump into it in order to put an end to his life.

It so happened that Dharitri had come to the lake for a bath. A young man of the town called Somadutta loved her silently over a long time. But the two never talked and even never knew each other's whereabouts. However, Dharitri had guessed that the young man was attracted towards her.

That day, as Dharitri advanced towards the water, Somadutta stood off the road, gazing at her intently. Like a bolt from the blue there appeared a mad elephant that had snapped its chain.

Dharitri stood petrified at the middle of the road. Somadutta

reached her in a bound or two and took her in his arms and ran away to safety, narrowly escaping the ferocious beast.

As soon as Somadutta set Dharitri on the ground, some of the relatives of Dharitri who were nearby came running to her. They expressed their concern for her in many words. Nobody paid much attention to Somadutta who saved her. Dharitri was yearning to thank him. But she got no chance to do it. The young man soon moved away from the crowd.

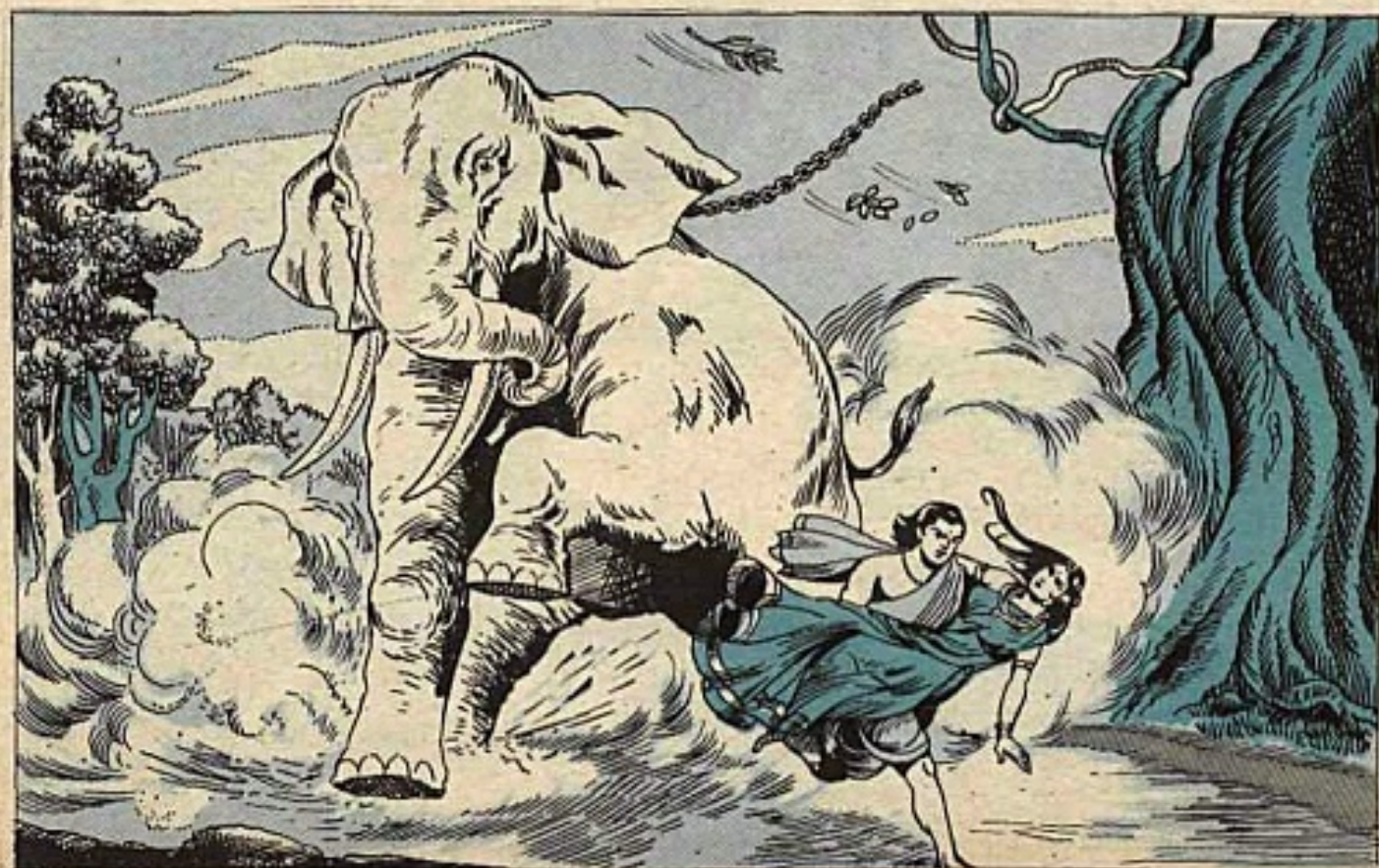
Vijay who witnessed the incident walked to Somadutta and told him, "My brother, you

saved not only that girl, but also myself!"

"How?" asked Somadutta.

"Despair was leading me to drown myself. But when I saw your brave deed, my mind changed. How courageous you were to risk your life to save another life. What a coward I was to think of killing myself! If I live, someday I may be of some help to somebody! I may even save someone's life as you did!" said Vijay.

Somadutta embraced Vijay. Both sat down on a rock and talked. Vijay told Somadutta about his love for Madirawati. Somadutta told Vijay about his



love for the unknown girl.

Soon they saw Madirawati and Dharitri, along with their maids, advancing in their direction. Somadutta knew that according to the custom of the town, the brides offered their prayers to an image of the god Kamadeva in the lake-side temple.

"Let us hide behind the deity and see how the matter stands," proposed Somadutta. The temple was only yards away from them. The two friends entered it and hid behind the deity.

Madirawati made her companions wait outside and entered the temple alone. She shut the

door behind her and then, in a choked voice, told the deity, "O Lord, you know that I wanted to marry Vijay. If that was not possible, I have no use in my life." She brought out a tiny box from a fold of her saree and opened it. She was about to swallow the poison it contained when Vijay and Somadutta rushed out.

"Don't do it!" said Vijay in a suppressed tone. Madirawati stood in a daze.

"No time to waste," said Somadutta. "Let me put on Madirawati's saree. Let her put on my clothes. Soon after I go out and mingle with those



ladies outside you two can escape."

Somadutta and Madirawati exchanged their clothes. Hiding his face under the veil, Somadutta went out and left the place with the ladies.

Madirawati, disguised as a young man, and Vijay left the temple after them. They walked at their fastest. With a little rest, they walked even for the whole night. Next day they arrived at the house of a well-wisher of Vijay, a priest, and got married. Then they went to Varanasi.

At Madirawati's house, Dharitri wanted to console her friend. She led Somadutta—whom she took to be Madirawati—into the garden, and said, "My dear friend, I know how sad you are at not being able to marry Vijay. My condition is

no much different. I would like to marry a certain young man. Only this morning he saved me from death. But I even don't know his name!"

Somadutta revealed his face. It took some time for Dharitri to realise that what she saw was no dream. Somadutta told her all that had happened.

It was evening. Somadutta shed his disguise. Both left for Varanasi.

Vijay and Madirawati received them with great warmth and arranged for their marriage. They sent a messenger to Ujjain to talk to the parents of Madirawati and Dharitri. The messenger performed his task well. The parents eagerly looked forward to receive their daughters and their sons-in-law.

And the couples came. All ended up in happiness.



PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Mr. Ravindra S. Kamboj



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Good-nature and good-sense must ever join. To err is human, to forgive divine.

—Alexander Pope

A merely fallen enemy may rise again, but the reconciled one is truly vanquished.

—Schiller

When the heart dares to speak it needs no preparation.

—German Proverb

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